

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed February 20, 2007, in the nature of a requirement for restriction, has been carefully reviewed. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Restriction has been required among what the Examiner considers to be patentably distinct species of the invention, as follows:

Group I, presently comprising claims 1-3, drawn to a method for screening a test compound;

Group II, presently comprising claims 4-5, drawn to a method for decreasing pigmentation in a subject;

Group III, presently comprising claims 6-9, drawn to a method for increasing pigmentation in a subject; and

Group IV, presently comprising claims 10-15, drawn to a composition for increasing pigmentation.

Applicant hereby elects Group I, presently comprising claims 1-3, drawn to a method for screening a test compound.

If the election requirement is maintained, it will be clear on the record that the PTO considers the groups to be patentably distinct from one another *i.e.*, *prima facie* non-

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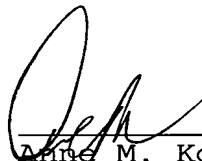
obvious from one another. This means that a reference identical to the one group would not render the other group *prima facie* obvious.

Favorable consideration and examination of all pending claims on the merits are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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